E.11.68

A SERMON

Preached before the

CORPORATION

OF

Trinity-Houſe

BIBL. CANT. ACAD.

IN

DEPTFORD STRAND,

At the ELECTION of their

MASTER, *May* xxx. 1681.

By *JOHN ROGERS*, A. M. and Chaplain to the RIGHT HONOURABLE *GEORGE* Earl of *BERKELEY*.

Published by their Appointment.

LONDON,

Printed by *J. Macock*, for *Richard Royſton*, Bookſeller to the Kings moſt Excellent Majeſty.

MDCLXXXI.

A

SERMON

PREACHED

ON THE

CORONATION

OF

KING GEORGE

IN

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY,

At the ELECTION of their

MINISTER, Sept. 22. 1761.

By JOHN ROGERS, A.M. and Chaplain to the

RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE

EARL TEMPLE.

1064.90

Published by their Appointment.

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seller to the King's most Excellent Majesty.

MDCCLXII.

TO THE

Right Honourable

GEORGE

EARL of *BERKELEY*, Viſcount DURESLEY, Lord BERKELEY of *Berkeley-Caſtle*, &c.

My Lord,

IN *humble Obedience to Your Lordſhips* Commands, *and due Submiſſion to a* Requeſt *made to Your Lordſhip by the worthy Maſter and Gentlemen of the* Corporation of Trinity-Houſe, *this Diſcourſe which was deſigned by me only for the* Pulpit, *now begs your Lordſhips and*

thoſe worthy Gentlemens Acceptance from the Preſs. *The Intention of it being to perſwade* Sea-faring *men to the Exerciſe of Religion and Vertue, upon Motives* proper *to themſelves; if, by God's Bleſſing upon it, it ſhall be a means of turning any one unto Righteouſneſs, it will be the moſt ample Return I expect for this bold Adventure abroad.*

My Lord, *if it were poſſible that all of your* high *Rank and Quality would, after your* great *Example, reſolve to be either Encouragers of* Trade, *or employ their Minds in ſome other way as ſerviceable to their* King, *their* Country, *and* Themſelves; *we might then hope to ſee every one of them become, what your Lordſhip* now *is, inflexibly* Loyal *to his Prince, a Hearty* Lover *of his Country,*

Country, a Great Friend *to Buſineſs and Trade, and a Profeſſed* Enemy *to the looſeneſs and degeneracy of the Age.*

My Lord,

I am

Your Lordſhips

moſt humble, and

moſt obedient

Servant and Chaplain,

JOHN ROGERS.

A SERMON *Preached before the Corporation of* TRINITY-HOUSE, *in* Deptford-Strand, *May* XXX. 1681.

JONAH I. 6.

So the Ship-maſter came to him, and ſaid unto him, What meaneſt thou, O Sleeper? Ariſe, call upon thy God, if ſo be that God will think upon us that we periſh not.

IN this Book, we have a compendious Hiſtory of the extraordinary miſſion of the Prophet *Jonah*, to preach Repentance to the *Ninivites*, whoſe wickedneſs had come up before the Lord. Wherein, if we conſider the Circumſtances that attend it, they will appear to be of a very ſtrange and extraordinary Nature; ſo ſeemingly oppoſite to the thing deſigned, and yet ſo harmonious and ſucceſsful in the Event, that this Inſtance alone were ſufficient to humble our minds, make

us acquieſce under all the Diſpenſations of Divine Providence, rely upon God's Ways, though they be never ſo unlike ours, and walk ſubmiſſively in his Paths, how crooked and intricate ſoever they may ſeem to be.

That a poor ſolitary Prophet out of *Iſrael*, ſhould enter the Streets of the great *Metropolis* of *Aſſyria*, *Niniveh* that great City, (whoſe compaſs, ſay Hiſtorians, was forty eight Miles, and her Towers fifteen hundred) nay ſo exceeding great, that the Prophet himſelf, *chap.* 3. *ver.* 3. affirms it to be three days journey within it ſelf; that he ſhould there denounce woful judgment againſt the Inhabitants thereof, if within forty days they humbled not themſelves before God; what could poſſibly be expected from ſo daring an attempt, but that the Prophet upon the firſt opening of his mouth, ſhould have immediately fell a Sacrifice to the fury of the enraged multitude? Yet behold the contrary! his words become *quick and powerful, and ſharper than a two-edged-ſword*; he no ſooner enters the City, and lifts up his voice, but the People believe God, and a Faſt is proclaimed by a Decree of King

Heb. 4. 12.

and

and Nobles, a Faſt ſo rigorous both for Man and Beaſt, that the like was never heard of before.

Again, *The word of the Lord came unto Jonah ſaying, Ariſe, go to Nineveh.* The ſpeedy execution of his Commiſſion, one would have thought, ſhould have been much forwarded by the near approach of the Judgment, *Yet forty days, and Nineveh ſhall be deſtroyed*: yet behold, he flies from the Preſence of the Lord, turns away from *Aſſyria*, goes on Board at *Joppa*, and is bound for *Cilicia*; nay, ſo regardleſs was he of his Commiſſion, that inſtead of trembling in the ſight of God (for alas, *Whither can he flee from his preſence? If he take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the Sea, even there ſhall his right hand hold him*) ſo regardleſs was he, I ſay, of the heavenly voice, and the Judgment conſequent upon ſo great Diſobedience, that he lays himſelf down in perfect ſecurity, is not to be awakened either by the loudneſs of the Winds, or the roaring of the Waters; till at laſt admoniſhed by a Heathen he is content to be caſt over-board, and takes up an unheard-of

Chap. 1. ver. 1, 2.

Chap. 3. ver. 4.

Pſal. 139. 7, 9, 10.

Lodging in the Belly of a Whale (which by the way muſt give occaſion for that Story of *Hercules* mentioned by *Lycophron*, who calls him τριέσπερον, becauſe he was preſerved three nights in the Belly of a Fiſh.) Now that all theſe ſo ſeemingly untoward accidents, ſhould be ſo wiſely managed in the Event, as to mightily advantage that End which they appeared ſo much directly to oppoſe; this plainly ſhews, that ſuch things *are the Lords doings, and ought to be marvellous in our eyes.* Yet upon theſe ſtrange occurrences, 'tis probable, the Mariners could not forbear ſpreading the report of them, which at laſt reaching *Nineveh*, might prepare the Prophets way, poſſeſs the people that he could not come to them but by a Miracle, that he was a Perſon extraordinarily ſent of God, and by this means gain credit and ſucceſs to his Preaching.

Jo. Tzetzes in Lycophr. initio Caſſand.

Pſal. 118. 23.

Vide Biſhop *Wilkins* Beauty of Providence.

Now among all the Paſſages of this Hiſtory, I have made choice of that which concerns the Prophet's behaviour whilſt out at Sea; as being moſt ſuitable to the preſent Occaſion, and moſt agreeable to my Deſign, which is to be as practical as I can:

—*What*

—*What meaneſt thou, O Sleeper? Ariſe, call upon thy God, if ſo be that God will think upon us that we periſh not.*

In ſpeaking to which words, I ſhall do theſe following things:

I. Shew, That the proper Effect of Dangers by Sea, ſhould be to awaken mens minds, and raiſe them up unto Acts of Devotion; *What meaneſt thou, O Sleeper? Ariſe, call upon thy God.*

II. The great Encouragement men have to do this, from the eſpecial Providence of God over Sea-affairs; *If ſo be that God will think upon us, that we periſh not.* And,

III. I ſhall crave leave to anſwer ſome Objections which this Diſcourſe may be thought liable unto.

I. That the proper Effect of Dangers by Sea ſhould be to awaken mens minds, and raiſe them up unto acts of Devotion; *What meaneſt thou, O Sleeper? Ariſe, call upon thy God.* To call upon God in times of Danger and Diſtreſs, is natural to mankind; but no kind of Dangers have ſuch an aptitude

in them to rouſe the Spirits of men, and make them think what their condition is towards God, as thoſe which ſea-faring men
2 Cor. 11. 25, 26. are frequently expoſed to. St *Paul* recounting the dangers he had paſſed through in preaching the Goſpel to the Nations, begins with *perils in the deep*, and again twice repeats it in the ſame verſe, *in perils of water*, *in perils in the Sea*; as if thoſe alone were the great afflictions he would moſt glory in: and the Philoſopher accounted men at Sea to be but a kind of Borderers be-
Pſal. 107. 23, 24. tween the living and the dead. *They that go down to the Sea in Ships*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *they ſee the works of the Lord, and his Wonders in the deep*; *i. e.* the great and mighty works of the Creation, and the extraordinary wonders of God's Providence, are ſo apparent to theſe mens eyes that they cannot but conſider them, and take eſpecial notice of the dangers they paſs through. And however cuſtom may in time wear off all Senſe of danger, yet can it never leſſen it, as will appear by conſidering theſe three things: (1.) The Suddenneſs of thoſe calamities which may happen to ſea-faring men;

men; (2.) The Number of them; and (3.) Their Frequency.

For their *Suddenneſs*, there are no kind of accidents to which the lives of men are ſubject, that are ſo ſure and ſwift Executioners as thoſe which lye in wait for Mariners. A man may linger out his days under a ſore Diſeaſe; and though ſome fiercer kinds may ſooner ſeize upon his Vitals, yet rarely is Death this way ſo ſwift of foot as not to give ſome Warning to the Patient, and by alarming his Conſcience make him ſo to conſider his latter end as to apply his heart to Wiſdom and Repentance. But alas! 'tis far otherwiſe in the condition I am now ſpeaking of; a man may ſee *a Cloud no bigger than his hand*, yet in a moment its waters ſhall overwhelm him, and the Deep ſhall ſwallow him up quick, before he ſhall be able to *ariſe, and call upon his God.* The conſideration of this cannot but inform you what obligations you have above other men to be always in a readineſs, and diligently to watch, becauſe you know not in what hour this ſad calamity may fall upon you. *Watch therefore, for you know not what hour the Lord*

1 Kings 18.44.

Matth. 24. 42, 43, 44.

Lord doth come. But know this, That if the good man of the house had known in what watch the Thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be you also ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh.

For the *Number* of the dangers, they become yet more terrible, and beyond my abilities to recount. The dangers of the Waters beneath, the falling of Spouts from above, the Rocks and Quicksands, the tempestuous Winds and Hurricanes without, any small Leak within, one Spark in the Gun-room, nay one wry step is sufficient to dispatch a man, and send him quick into another World. And can any one in his right senses reflect upon these things, and yet neglect *the working out his salvation with fear and trembling*? Consider but in what an Amazement must that wretched man be, who passes immediately with Oaths and Execrations in his mouth, to make his appearance before the Judgment-Seat of Christ; What a surprize must it needs be unto him, when he awakens in another World, and begins then to *call upon his God* when

Philip. 2. 12.

when he can expect no other Anſwer than, *I know you not, depart from me you wicked into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels!* Again, Matth. 25. 41.

For the *Frequency* of the dangers, they are yet more formidable; becauſe this will certainly convince you that theſe ſad Afflictions are not only poſſible, but common unto men, and that for ought any one knows to the contrary his own turn is next. Now that the dangers which ſea-faring men are expoſed to are frequent and common, and do ordinarily happen unto them, there needs no other Argument to convince you than your own experience of them; the many reſcues you have had out of the very Jaws of Death, thoſe many, and even miraculous, deliverances which you cannot but be ſenſible of, and which have happened to you even then when all hopes of eſcape ſeemed to be quite taken away. I ſhould not have mentioned this particular, but that I am afraid it is an opinion too common amongſt you, That ſince the great improvements of Navigation, and the daily advancement of Knowledge in Sea-affairs, the

the Ocean is now rendred ſo paſſable and ſecure, that the Accidents ſeem not to exceed thoſe which men in general are expoſed to; and yet out of your own mouths may you be convinced, ſince it is hardly poſſibly to find one ſea-faring man, who is not able to recount as many dangers as voyages, and does not after a long and perillous abſence from home, eſteem it almoſt a reſurrection from the dead to recover his native Shore again.

Now if theſe things were but once throughly conſidered and laid to heart, one would think it almoſt impoſſible there ſhould be any ſuch Monſter in the World as a looſe and irreligious Sea-man, and that theſe are they of all men who *live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world*, who pray continually, and call upon their God, and are leaſt obnoxious to inconſideration and ſtupidity; that theſe are they who live in a perpetual ſenſe of the protecting Arm of God, and a continual dread of his Majeſty, *in whom*, after an extraordinary manner, *they live and move, and have their being*, and that if this ſort of warfare cannot perſwade

Qui neſcit orare, diſcat navigare.

ſwade men, *neither will they be perſwaded though one ſhould riſe* to them *from the dead*; there being nothing in this World which in its own nature can tend more to the awakening of mens minds, and bring them over into the ways of Religion and Vertue, than that perillous ſtate *they* live in, through the *ſuddenneſs*, the *number* and *frequency* of thoſe calamities which are always incident to ſeafaring men. I come therefore to ſhew,

II. What great encouragement you have to call upon God, from the conſideration of his eſpecial Providence over Sea-affairs; *If ſo be that God will think upon us, that we periſh not.* And whoever conſiders how full and expreſs the Scriptures are in the declaration of this truth, he will at the ſame time be inclined to think, That though Gods Providence and *his mercy are over all his works*, yet the great ſtrokes of his Divine Arm are made moſt manifeſt in the Deep. For he it is *who commandeth and raiſeth the ſtormy wind,* Pſal. 107. 25. *which lifteth up the waves of the Sea. He ga-* Pſal. 33. 7. *thereth the waters of the Sea together as an heap, and layeth up the depth in his ſtore-houſes; he tread-* Pſal. 65. 7. *eth upon the waves of the Sea, and ſtilleth the*

Pſal. 89. 9. *noiſe of the Seas, and the noiſe of their waves; he ruleth the raging of the Sea, and when the waves*
Jer. 5. 22. *thereof ariſe, he ſtilleth them. Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my preſence, which have placed the Sand for the Bound of the Sea, by a perpetual Decree, that it cannot paſs it, and though the waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevail, though they roar, yet can they not paſs over it?* And what an encouragement muſt it needs be to ſerve and fear that God, who is thus able to think upon you that you periſh not? It cannot but be highly your concern to engage this Providence on your ſide, which is only able to deliver you, unleſs you can pretend like
Herodotus. *Xerxes* to ſtop the raging of the Sea, by caſting Manacles and Fetters into the *Helleſpont*; which he was as able to perform as
Job 38. 31. thou art to *bind the ſweet influences of Pleiades, or looſe the bands of Orion.* Alas! theſe are the Ordinances of Heaven, and from hence alone muſt we expect to be delivered out of our diſtreſs. But tell me, O wretched man, whoever thou art, that art not uſed to *call upon thy God* but in thy Oaths and Blaſphemies, which way canſt thou promiſe to thy

ſelf

ſelf ſecurity, whilſt thou thinkeſt thus to outface God, and defie the Almighty when he hath got thee faſt (if I may ſo ſpeak) in the very Element of his wrath. *What meaneſt thou, O Sleeper?* Doſt thou preſumptuouſly go on becauſe thy misfortunes hitherto have not been worſe than other mens? *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of God's goodneſs, and forbearance, and long ſuffering; not knowing that the goodneſs of God ſhould lead thee to repentance? but after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart treaſureſt up unto thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who (when the Sea ſhall give up her dead) will render to every man according to his deeds.* 'Tis true, how much ſoever we call upon our God, yet on the other hand may we ſtill fail of a deliverance, and there is no reaſon to expect that the event muſt punctually anſwer our deſires, unleſs we were as able to judge for our ſelves as infinite wiſdom it ſelf is. But although ordinarily it cannot be ſuppoſed that every good man ſhould hear the voice of God (whoſe he is, and whom he ſerves) ſpeaking to him after the ſame manner as once to the Apoſtle Saint

Rom. 2. 4, 5, 6.

Apoc. 20. 13.

Acts 27. 24. *Paul; Fear not, thou muſt be brought before Cæſar, and lo I have given thee all them that ſail with thee*; though, I ſay, it were unjuſtifiable thus to preſume upon extraordinary acts of Providence, yet does it not at all follow from hence that good men are not entituled to the mercies and deliverances of God, and the bad are not ſometimes examples of his vengeance. This is plainly acknowledged by the Philoſopher, when he beſpoke his wretched Companions after this manner, Σιγᾶτε (ἔφη) μὴ ἄισθωνται ὑμᾶς ἐνθάδε πλέοντας, &c. Hold your peace (ſays he) leſt the gods knowing that you ſail with us, we all periſh for your ſakes.

III. I come now to anſwer ſome Objections which this Diſcourſe may be thought liable unto. And the moſt plauſible that I can think of are theſe that follow:

1. That Religion is apt to inject fear into mens minds, which muſt needs render it very improper for ſea-faring men.

2. It will take up too much of your time, and ſlacken your endeavours in caſes of imminent danger.

3. That the Knowledge of the Seas is rather

rather apt to draw men off from the belief of a God and Providence, than to ſettle and eſtabliſh them in it.

And if theſe things be ſo, I have loſt my labour, all my advice is in vain. But let us ſee of what force theſe Objections are, before we and our Religion ſo eaſily part. And,

1. 'Tis ſaid, That Religion is apt to inject fear into mens minds, which muſt needs render it very improper for ſea-faring men. For, it being already granted that throughout the whole viſible Creation, there is not to be found ſuch another Scene of aſtoniſhing dangers, as men ſometimes meet with out at Sea; when they are on all ſides terrified with grim Meſſengers of death, and, as the Pſalmiſt well expreſſeth it, *they reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end*: It will then follow, that they of all men in the World have at ſuch time the greateſt need of an undaunted courage, and a bold and reſolute mind. But this cannot otherwiſe be obtained, than by caſting off all apprehenſions of Death and Hell, and a Judgment to come; Pſal. 107. 27.

come; which will ſo infeeble mens minds and prey upon their Spirits, that the effect of dwelling upon ſuch thoughts will certainly appear to be an heartleſs and deſpairing condition; and ſince it were the beſt way to overlook all thoſe terrours which are ſo viſible about us, what reaſon is there that we ſhould create new ones which are not ſeen, and raiſe a more formidable enemy within our ſelves. In anſwer to this,

Firſt, I yield partly to what the Objection ſuppoſes, That bad men when their lives are in real danger, have the terrours of the Lord upon them, and a fearful expectation of a Judgment to come: and if men will venture out at Sea with evil habits about them, and laden with iniquity, there is no help for it if the fears of Death and a Judgment conſequent upon it, ſhall naturally accompany and overſet them. There is no other poſſible remedy in this caſe but one, and that is, That ſuch men would deal by their ſins, as the Mariners in the Verſe before my Text were forced to do by their wares, get rid of them as ſpeedily as they can, that by ſo doing they may lighten

lighten the Veſſel, and having *laid aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet them, they may run with patience that race which is ſet before them.* But then, Heb. 12. 1.

Secondly, On the other hand, it is as certain that nothing inſpires men more with true courage and bravery of reſolution than Religion and Vertue. For when men have got at liberty from their Luſts, and are become Maſters of themſelves, and have abandoned the ſoft Paths of eaſe and luxury; as in times of the greateſt difficulty and hazard, they will far exceed other men in ſagacity and preſence of mind (and conſequently in a happy diſcovery of the beſt means of eſcape) ſo will they alſo truly become better inabled to undergo the worſt of hardſhips, and to weather out the moſt violent Storms: and whereas the wicked are full of inward diſconſolations and fearful abodings, which ſo diſtract their minds, that they are already ſunk in deſpair; the vertuous man is ſecure of God's Providence on his ſide, and is certainly aſſured, That whatever the ſucceſs of his endeavours be, he ſhall be ſtill on the victorious Party: for he well

well knows that that God whom he ſerves will either deliver him out of his preſent calamities, or will bring him to his laſt, his beſt and moſt deſired Haven. And now what is there that ſhall be able to diſmantle the ſpirit of a man thus fortified? or rob him of his reſolution and his courage? both which, like a wiſe man, he hath founded upon a Rock, and *let the rain deſcend, the floods come, and the winds beat upon him,* 'tis to no purpoſe, *they can never fall,* for *he hath built them upon a Rock.* On the contrary, how does Vice naturally tend to debaſe mens ſpirits, and render them cowardly and effeminate, unfit to ſuſtain thoſe many (and oftentimes laſting) ſeverities which a ſea-warfare does expoſe them to; either through foulneſs of weather, inhumanity of ſtrangers, ſcarcity and badneſs of proviſion, indiſpoſition of body paſſing through various Climes, &c. and, what is worſe than all theſe outward calamities, (to make up the vicious mans condition compleatly miſerable) he hath alſo a galled Conſcience within, and is ſo continually toſſed with reſtleſs and perplexing thoughts, that he becomes

Matth. 7. 24, 25.

comes *like the troubled Sea before him, which cannot reſt, and whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt.* Iſai. 57. 20.

I have the longer inſiſted upon this Point, becauſe I am ſenſible I ſpeak to thoſe who, of all men living, are the moſt jealous of their courage and fortitude, and therefore ſhall not be blamed by you, if I eſtabliſh them upon their true foundations. But then,

2. It is urged, That Religion will take up too much of your time, and ſlacken your endeavours in caſes of imminent danger. In times of fatal concern, when the unruly Element becomes boiſterous and ungovernable, and plays with the goodlieſt Veſſel as eaſily as the Leviathan ſports with an empty Cask; when all on a ſudden the Ocean becomes a confuſed Chaos, heighth and depth, light and darkneſs are mingled together; then, when all hands ſhould be at work, and every pull ſeems to be the laſt tug for life; then, I ſay, for a man to betake himſelf to his prayers, or with the Prophet, go down into the ſides of the Ship, there lay himſelf down to ſleep (thoug

perhaps the next moment it may prove his laſt) or, what is much the ſame thing, there fling himſelf wholly upon Gods Protection, rely upon his Providence, and reſt aſſured that nothing but a Divine hand can ſave and deliver him: what is this but to render men uſeleſs in their Arts, inſenſible of their danger, and even to betray them out of their lives? and if this be the effect of calling upon God, it were as good men ſhould ſhipwrack their faith as themſelves.

In reply to this, St *Paul*'s Rule holds
2 Theſſ. 3. 10. good, That *if any would not work, neither ſhould they eat.* Idleneſs and ſloth, vain preſumption and cauſeleſs ſecurity are ſo far from being countenanced by Religion, that it lays the greateſt obligations upon men to the contrary. It charges diligence and induſtry upon mens Conſciences, and lets them know that they muſt one day give a ſevere account for the miſuſe of that time which once loſt can never be regained; it tells them, That though they ſhould be careleſs of themſelves, yet no conſideration ought to make them prodigal of the lives of
Eccleſ. 9. 2. other men, where *all things muſt happen alike*

to

to all, and there will be but one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to him that ſweareth, and to him that feareth an Oath.

But now what hinders that men cannot reconcile their buſineſs and their devotions together, and let their minds be well employed however their Bodies are exerciſed? Sure I am, this would be ſo far from hindring you in your labours, how urgent and preſſing ſoever they may be, that it will make you undergo them with much greater alacrity and cheerfulneſs of mind and ſweet hopes of ſucceſs; for to entertain ſerious thoughts, to put up a prayer to God, and with the Diſciples of our Lord to cry out *Lord ſave us, we periſh*, will add a great Spur to your endeavours. Matth. 8. 25. I come now,

3. To conſider, Whether the Knowledge of the Seas is rather apt to draw men off from the belief of a God and Providence, than to ſettle and confirm them in it. This Objection, I confeſs, is home to the buſineſs, and if this be true, what I have already ſaid may paſs for nothing. But let us examine thoſe Reaſons which ſeem to prop up this Opinion; and they are theſe that follow:

First, That by the Knowledge of the Seas men discover many useless parts of the Creation.

Secondly, They get considerable Instances against the universality of the Notion of God.

First, That by the Knowledge of the Seas are discovered many useless parts of the Creation. This hath been frequent in the mouths of bad men, and is an opinion which their old Champion *Lucretius* hath so garnished and tricked up with Poetry, that the gilded Pill hath passed very glibly with loose and inconsidering men. What use of the torrid and frigid Zones? to what purpose serve the barren Deserts, inaccessible Mountains and craggy Rocks? will not the Sea willingly resign up her Hurricanes, and *Afric* spare all her Monsters, *&c.* Thus is God's Providence called in question, and his infinite Wisdom arraigned; nay the bolder sort scoff at the workmanship of his hands, and take up that blasphemous Speech of the insolent Spaniard, *Si Creationi affuissem, Mundum melius ordinâssem*: had I been present at the making of the World, I could have disposed

poſed things after a better ſort.

Now, beſides that the torrid Zone is well known by you to be habitable, and a conſiderable part alſo of the frigid, and that both ſerve very wiſe ends and purpoſes; beſides this, the inclination of the Axis of the Earth is ſo admirably proportioned for the making it as habitable as poſſible, that the joint wit of mankind is not able to imagine the leaſt circumſtance in which it might have been mended. And for thoſe other things which ſeem ſo hurtful to the World, though it were ſufficient to reply in the words of the Son of *Sirach*, That *there be Spirits that are created for vengeance, which in their fury lay on ſore ſtrokes, in the time of deſtruction they pour out their force and appeaſe the wrath of him that made them; fire and hail, famine and death, all theſe were created for vengeance*: though, I ſay, there needs no other Anſwer than this, yet I think it ſufficient once for all to know, That things of admirable uſe in themſelves may to our underſtandings appear quite otherwiſe, and to be of no uſe at all. Of which take this conſiderable Inſtance; There was a time not many Ages ago, when the World

Eccluſ. 39. 28, 29.

World no doubt eſteemed of the Magnet no more than of a deſpicable Stone, part of the Rubbiſh of the Creation, or at beſt but ſome of the Ballaſt of the Globe; but I need not tell you (to borrow the words of a learned Prelate of our Church) how by the application of a Needle to this Stone you get the maſtery of the unruly Ocean, ride ſecurely upon the back of the dark waters, and make it ſupply the place of the Stars in Heaven; how by the help of this you examine all the Chambers of the Sun, and imitate him in compaſſing the World; how you go out at the Eaſt and return again from the Weſt, return laden with the Treaſuries of the World; how by the help of this you ſettle a correſpondence betwixt the moſt diſtant places of the World, and open a traffick between Nations concealed from the knowledge of one another almoſt ever ſince the floating of the Ark. But what do I ſpeak of theſe things? By the aſſiſtance of this you diſplay the Banner of Chriſt in the Regions of Death and Hell, and ſhed forth the glorious light of the Goſpel to the people that *ſit in darkneſs, and in the*

Biſhop *Ward's* Eſſay of the Immortality of the Soul.

Luke 1. 79.

the ſhadow of Death. Now what ſenſible analogy or correſpondence is there betwixt a Stone and theſe glorious effects which proceed from it? This Inſtance alone might be ſufficient to confound the ſinful curioſities of men, and ſtop the mouth of the moſt plauſible Gainſayer. I come therefore,

Secondly, To conſider the remaining part of the Objection, which is, That by the knowledg of the Seas men get conſiderable Inſtances againſt the univerſality of the Notion of a God, and upon that account are inclinable to be drawn off from the belief of his Being. For it cannot be denied that upon ſome Eaſtern, but eſpecially Weſtern, Diſcoveries there have been found a ſort of people amongſt whom it was difficult, if at all poſſible, to diſcern the leaſt footſteps of Religion, or any notices of a ſupreme Being; which, ſay they, is a plain reaſon that the Notion of a Deity is not congenite, becauſe not common and univerſal to mankind. But granting as much as this Objection ſuppoſes, That there are to be found ſuch rude and barbarous people

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in the World that juſt differ from beaſts only by a ſcanty language and a humane ſhape, ſo far unskilled in Arts, and the moſt obvious deductions from ſenſe, as to want Logick ſufficient to clothe their nakedneſs, or but tolerably purvey for their Stomachs; granting, I ſay, there are ſuch men to be found, who know nothing in the World beyond themſelves, and are perfectly without God in the World; yet will it not from hence follow, that amongſt people whoſe minds are uſed to conſideration, and their faculties duly exerciſed, any one national Inſtance of the like nature can be found: ſufficient it is, that as ſoon as we are able to approve our ſelves men by the uſe and exerciſe of our reaſon and underſtanding, the Notion of a God becomes ſo agreeable to us, that our Nature ſeems to ſtand bent that way, and we cannot deny the one without uſing violence to the other.

And now, having done with what I at firſt propoſed to ſpeak unto, give me leave to apply this Diſcourſe by offering to your conſideration theſe two things:

1. The eſpecial Providence of God to this

this Nation in relation to Sea-affairs.

2. What ſuitable returns were proper for you to make for ſo great benefits which he hath done unto you.

1. Conſider the eſpecial Providence of God to this Nation in relation to Sea-affairs. And whether we conſider the ſcituation of our Country, the temper of our Climate, the advantage of our Shipping, or the nature and conſtitution of our Trade, we have every where great reaſon to bleſs God, and to acknowledge he hath not dealt ſo with many Nations.

By the ſcituation of our Country we are encompaſſed with Seas, ſurrounded every where with commodious Havens. If we turn our faces to the South, there is a vaſt proſpect before us, and unknown Regions call upon us; the Northern Parts are our Neighbours and Acquaintance, and on the one hand we have the old World, and on the other the new. So that our Iſland ſeems by Providence deſigned to be the very Center of Navigation and Trade, and that it ſhall one day be the glory of our great City what was anciently that of *Tyre*, That the *Harveſt*

Isai. 23. 3. *of the River is her revenues, and She is the Mart of Nations.*

The temper of our Climate is so auspicious, that as we are not scorched on the one hand, so neither are we frozen on the other, but enjoy a seasonable and moderate revolution of heat and cold; the great advantages of which, you that are continually passing through several Climes are much more sensible of than I can be; how by this means you become better enabled to endure extremities of Zones, and by your happy Constitutions seem to be so equally disposed for all places, that you may every one challenge upon a natural account, what the Philosopher did upon a moral, the reputation of being Citizens of the World. But alas! how would the *Russian* dissolve under the Line, and a Native of *Guinea* grow stiff upon the Coasts of *Spitsberge*?

In the advantages of our Shipping we so exceedingly surpass all others, that beside, that the most fundamental and necessary parts thereof are the growth of our own Forests, we do also for art and workmanship

Exod. 31. 3. (as God once taught *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* their skill)

skill) ſeem to be inſtructed from aboye, and our Axes and Hammers Divinely taught to do their work.

And when I have given to God the things which are his, the glory and the praiſe; it cannot be thought unreaſonable to give *Cæſar* his due, under whoſe kindly influence and protection Navigation ſeems to be grown up to its perfect ſtature, who not only (after the example of the wiſeſt of Kings) gives order in our *Ezion-geber* for a Royal Navy, but (what the Scriptures mention not of him) is himſelf alſo a Maſter-builder, and in this Inſtance is a truer repreſentative of the great Architect of the World than all the Princes in Chriſtendome beſide, who can in the ſame language inſtruct his Artificers with which God appointed the Patriarch to build his Ark, *This is the faſhion which thou ſhalt make it of, theſe are the rooms which you ſhall make in it, this ſhall be the length, and breadth, and heighth thereof, and thus ſhall you pitch it within and without.* 1 Kings 9. 26. Gen. 6. 14, 15.

The nature and conſtitution of our Trade is ſuch, that it promiſes a laſting endurance, and the faireſt hopes of a yet further advance,

Traffick being ſetled with us upon as ſure and ſolid foundations as the encouragement of a moſt Gracious Prince, and the beſt compacted Societies can beſtow upon it.

I am not ignorant that this laſt is ſo far from being reckoned a priviledge by ſome, that they account it the great *remora* of Trade: I preſume not to enter into the merits of the Cauſe, it being as much beſide my buſineſs, as it is beyond my skill; but it is to be feared the great outcry for liberty of *Trade* is near of kin to that for liberty of *Conſcience*, which to our ſorrows we have experienced was only a politick ſetch of a Party to lay all in common, till ſuch time as they could get ſufficient power and ſtrength to incloſe all for themſelves, then change their Note, and much more ſtifly oppoſe that common benefit for which they themſelves were ſo lately Advocates. But on which ſide ſoever the advantage lyes, this is ſure, That the ancient Glory of *Tyre* is become the preſent condition of this Nation, ſince our *Merchants are Princes, and our Traffickers the Honourable of the Earth.* Iſai. 23. 8.

2. Let us conſider, What ſuitable returns were

were proper for you to make for all theſe benefits which God hath done unto you. And I think you cannot give a greater and more proper demonſtration of your thankfulneſs for theſe ſo great mercies, than the ſincere practice of theſe following Duties:

Firſt, A zealous endeavour after the propagation of true Religion.

Secondly, Walking honeſtly towards them which are without. And,

Thirdly, A thankful remembrance of the dangers you have eſcaped.

Firſt, A zealous endeavour after the propagation of true Religion. This is the nobleſt end of Navigation, and the moſt profitable Plantation you can make, to ſpread the glorious light of the Goſpel, and deliver men from the powers of Hell and darkneſs; it will conſecrate all your Returns from abroad, and render your *merchandiſe holineſs unto the Lord*; and what more ſuitable return can you make unto God for his manifold bleſſings beſtowed upon you, than to make your ſelves Inſtruments of *turning men from Idols to ſerve* that *living God*. And that you may not be unready *always to give an anſwer*

Iſai. 23. 18.

1 Theſſ. 1. 9.

1 Pet. 3. 15.

ſwer to every man that asketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you, the excellent *Grotius* hath furniſhed you with invincible Arguments against the Gentile, Jew and Mahometan; and to make up that Armour compleat, you may find lately added unto it a Shield of the true Faith, wherewith you ſhall be able *to* Epheſ. 6. 16. *quench all the fiery Darts* of the Church of *Rome*. How much more proper a Companion would this be for you, where by Calms and contrary Winds you are ſometimes put to it for diverſions, than ſuch unmanly exerciſes which tend only to the ſcandal of your Religion, the corrupting of your Conſtitutions, and the eternal perdition of your ſouls? But,

Secondly, Another proper return to God for his benefits unto you, would be a walking honeſtly towards them which are without. To preſerve, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, a good Conſcience, by having your converſation ho- 1 Pet. 2. 12. neſt among the Gentiles; that *whereas they ſpeak againſt you as evil Doers, they may by your good works which they ſhall behold, glorifie God in the day of viſitation.* For when all is done a good life is the beſt Argument in the World, nor can you bring greater Glory to God, nor remove

move worſe ſcandal from our moſt holy Religion, than by letting *your light ſo ſhine before men*; Matth. 5. 16. *that they may ſee your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* For, as one out of his own experience hath obſerved, *Quod Barbari fidem noſtram de moribus judicant; proclivius quippe eſt quod videas credere, quam quod audias, & rarò perſuadet factis ſermo contrarius*: That the barbarous people do always judge of our Faith according to our lives, it being much eaſier to give credit to what a man ſees, than what he hears, and rarely will that diſcourſe perſwade which is accompanied with contrary actions. Acoſta, lib. 4. cap. 5.

Thirdly, and laſtly, A thankful remembrance of the dangers you have eſcaped is a moſt proper return to make to God for all the wonders of his mercy. There are many of you here, ſuch laſting Monuments of Gods Providence, that in a good old Age, you can perhaps reckon more dangers you have eſcaped than you can ſumm up years; O therefore *praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and his wonders that he doth for the Children of men.* Let no miracle of his love eſcape your notice, but let every one of them find ſome room in your Journals, that you may know how good and Pſal. 107. 8.

gracious

gracious the Lord hath been unto you. This is a juſt Sacrifice of praiſes and thankſgivings,
Hoſ. 6. 6. yet *I will have mercy*, ſaith the Lord, *and not ſacrifice*, *i. e.* God is well pleaſed with the former when it becomes a means and cauſe of the latter. And indeed your Alms are the
Acts 10. 4. beſt *memorial that can come up before God*, who for his mercies to us hath enjoined us pity and
Matth. 25. 40. compaſſion to our Brethren, for *in as much as you have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, you have done it unto me*, ſaith our Saviour. But what need I animate this worthy Society, and provoke a Duty ſo good and acceptable to you, for your works already praiſe you, and the prayers of the poor and deſtitute do light upon you. May their prayers and your bleſſings ſtill accompany each other, till at laſt
Matth. 25. 34, 35. you come to hear that joyful *Euge*, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink*, &c. Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, to the ever bleſſed and glorious Trinity, three Perſons and one God, be all honour and praiſe now and for evermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.